Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Radio Service

OFFICE OF INFORMATION

HOMEMAKERS' CHAT TUESDAY, January 21, 1941

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS." Information from the Office of Experiment Stations, U.S.D.A.

--ooOoo--

The little things in the kitchen count so much toward easy work and good cooking. No wonder the mailbag often fills up with questions about kitchen tools, small and large. This week a number of these questions are waiting for answers. For example, here are 2 letters from young housewives who are outfitting their kitchens. One asks for advice on mixing bowls; the other wants to know whether aluminum or enamelware is the best choice in saucepans.

Let's answer first the question about mixing bowls. The young lady who asks it wants to know especially about the best kind of bowl for mixing everything from muffins to angel food. She also asks how many bowls and what size bowls the average kitchen needs.

The answer to this letter comes from Maud Wilson of the Oregon Experiment Station who recently finished a study of utensils for the farm kitchen. Miss Wilson says the best bowl for mixing is fairly deep with smooth sloping sides and a rounded bottom--no cracks or corners where food can get lost. She suggests, too, that you need a deeper bowl for beating with a rotary beater than for mixing or beating with a spoon. A rotary beater splashes food more.

You will find a great many sets of bowls on sale in the stores today. But Miss Wilson is not in favor of buying bowls in sets. She says you need both deep and shallow bowls in the kitchen, not a set of bowls all one shape.

You can buy mixing bowls of metal, enamelware, glass or earthenware. Miss Wilson favors glass or earthenware. Bowls made of these materials are heavy enough

to stay in place while you beat instead of slipping and sliding as lighter bowls may do. Glass and earthenware bowls also have the advantage of not chipping or scratching in beating, and not discoloring foods mixed in them.

As to how many bowls you need, Miss Wilson suggests 4 bowls of different sizes for the average kitchen. She suggests one small bowl holding only one quart; another holding 2 quarts; then a 4-quart bowl; and finally a 6-quart bowl. These 4 should take care of all the mixing needs of the average family, provided you don't use them for other things like holding food in the refrigerator. Every kitchen needs some bowls to be used for mixing only, nothing else.

By the way, one helpful suggestion offered by Miss Wilson is about choosing the right size bowl for the job. She says in general you want to choose a bowl twice as large as the food you are going to mix in it. Then you'll have plenty of room for stirring, beating or whipping with no splashing or spilling off-side.

Question No. 2 comes from a bride who can't decide between aluminum and enamelware for her saucepans and kettles. Her letter asks which she had better use.

This question also goes to Miss Wilson for reply. Miss Wilson says enamelware is smooth, and attractice in appearance, and neither acid nor alkali affect the better grades. Enamelware absorbs heat quickly, but unfortunately it does not conduct heat evenly. For this reason, foods scorch more easily in enamelware than in aluminum.

Another fault housewives often find with enamelware is that the glaze chips and exposes the metal under the enamel. These chips of enamel may get into food.

Two points to keep in mind if you buy enamelware are: Use great care in handling enamelware both in cooking and in dishwashing. Take care never to bruise or dent it. Use a wooden spoon when you stir in enamelware. And take care not to subject enamelware to sudden heat or cold.

As for aluminum; it does not rust or chip; is lightweight and convenient to handle; and is moderate in cost. What's more, aluminum is a good conductor of heat so foods do not easily scorch in it. The disadvantage of aluminum is that alkalies in food, water and soap darken it. But it is easy to brighten aluminum with weak acids like dilute vinegar, sour milk or fruit; or to brighten it with a fine scouring material like steel wool.

Aluminum is a good choice for most kettles and saucepans. But enamelware makes the ideal double boiler for cooking cream sauce, salad dressing, and other light-colored mixtures that might discolor in metal.

Now here's a letter from a housewife who is considering buying an electric roaster. She says: "From all I hear these roasters will cook anything. But I'm not just sure whether they can be used for canning. Will you inform me about that?"

Mr. P. B. Potter who made the recent study of electric roasters at the Virginia Experiment Station says: An electric roaster provides convenient heat for canning, especially where small quantities of garden products are to be canned each day when they are fresh. The roaster pan itself holds a number of cans conveniently. And an electric roaster does not heat up the kitchen in summer as much as a big stove does. But an electric roaster only acts as a small stove and container in canning; it won't take the place of a pressure cooker. It won't do for vegetables and meat that need a temperature above boiling to can safely.

That's all the questions for today. Listen for more on Thursday.

#